**Talking Points for Distracted Driving Talk**

**About the Talking Points**

This document contains talking points for someone giving an informal talk about distracted driving (with emphasis on using a phone while driving). This talk could be given during a “brown bag” lunch learning session, or at the beginning or end of an employee meeting. With modest adjustments, this could also be used when talking to members/community groups.

These talking points follow the format of the presentation on distracted driving.

**Time frame**

Approximately 25 min. to deliver the Talking Points. 30 minutes for discussion/Q&A. You can adjust the timeframe by adjusting the time you want to spend on the discussion/Q&A period.

**Note**

There is a No Text, No Talk Pledge that is the centerpiece of this effort (attached at end of document).

This pledge was first introduced at NRECA’s Safety Leadership Summit and is part of a nationwide effort initiated by NRECA and Federated.

This effort is in keeping with our goal of creating and fostering a culture of safety.

It also ties back to our cooperative principle of Concern for Community. We want to encourage a conversation in each co-op community about this important issue that impacts our employees’ and public safety.

**Introduction - Distracted Driving is Considered a Public Health Hazard**

* Distracted Driving – as mobile technology increases, more and more people rightly see distracted driving – talking, texting, sending emails – as a growing threat to community safety.
* We have all seen distracted drivers, and most likely, everyone in this room has used their phone while driving or you have been in a car where the driver was using his/her phone.
* I want to say early on that I’m not here to lecture. The purpose here is really to open up a dialog, to discuss a serious problem that impacts everyone in this room and in our community.
* Drivers don’t realize the dangers posed when they take their eyes of the road and their hands off the wheel and focus on activities other than driving.

**Why is Your Co-op Talking to You About Your Driving?**

* Distracted driving impacts everyone – those who drive, those who are passengers, pedestrians, other drivers and bystanders. On the tragic end of the spectrum, it’s also victims’ families, friends, co-workers and community.
* This is part of our overall commitment to the safety of our employees, their families and our members and the co-op principle of Concern for Community.
* Studies show that the majority of drivers use cell phones while driving – this increases the likelihood of accidents.
* We can all do our part to stay safe and make the roads safer for our community; which is why we are here today. It is our hope that we can promote a culture of safety not only here at the co-op, but that you can continue this conversation at home with your family and friends.
* We are initiating this program along with co-ops across the country to make our corner of the world safer – but we can’t do it without your help.

**Scope of the Problem**

* **60% of drivers use cell phones while driving,** according to a 2011 Harris Poll. That’s more than half of the drivers on the road at any one time.
* Clearly this is a big problem in every state in the nation.
* People feel pressure to remain in constant contact, even when behind the wheel.
* There are many organizations at the state, regional and federal level addressing this problem.
* If we’re honest, we have all been in the same situation.
* **Again, this talk is not meant to be a lecture, but rather a conversation**.
* We need to recognize the fact that **WE are those distracted drivers – driving and using a phone is not multi-tasking – it’s driving while distracted.**
* According to the National Safety Council:
* When talking on a cell phone, drivers can miss seeing up to half of what's around them -- traffic lights, stop signs, pedestrians.
* **An estimated 1 in 4 car crashes involves cell phone use.**
* Many distractions exist while driving, but cell phones are a top distraction because so many drivers use them for long periods of time each day.
* Almost everyone has seen a driver distracted by a cell phone, but **when you are the one who is distracted, you often don't realize that driver is you.**

**More Data on Distracted Driving:**

* In 2013, 3,154 people were killed in distracted driving crashes. (National Highway Admin.)
* There is a new study released by AT&T in conjunction with their “It Can Wait” campaign. It reveals that:
  + Nearly 4-in-10 smartphone users tap into social media while driving.
  + Almost 3-in-10 surf the net.
  + 1-in-10 video chat.
  + 7-in-10 people engage in smartphone activities while driving.
* Pretty incredible numbers.
* Texting and emailing are still the most prevalent. Unfortunately, other smartphone activity use behind the wheel is now common.
* A 2013 Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI) study shows an increased risk of getting into a crash when engaging in visual-manual subtasks (such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting) associated with the use of hand-held phones and other portable devices.

**5 Key Facts to Know and Tell**

* So while there is lots of information and statistics out there on distracted driving, here are just a few key facts I want to share:

1. This first one is pretty sobering—this is even scarier if you are traveling at a faster speed. Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. When traveling at 55mph, that's enough time to cover the length of a football field. (*Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, 2009*)
2. Device-related tasks such as reaching for a phone, dialing, and texting increased the risk of getting into a crash by three times. (*Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, 2009*)
3. Phone conversations of any type increase reaction times and increase variations in speed, lane deviations, and steering wheel control. (*AAA Foundation*)
4. **Talking on a cell phone** **quadruples your risk of an accident, about the same as if you were driving drunk**. Risk doubles again if you are texting while driving.
5. Youth are most at risk. Drivers in their 20s make up 27% of the distracted drivers in fatal crashes. (CDC)

**What Are *WE* Doing About This Problem?**

* We/[NAME OF CO-OP] are trying to raise greater awareness of the problem in our community by starting and fostering a community conversation about it – beginning here and now.
* We are joining with other co-ops across the country that are also participating in this effort.
* Our goals are to:
* Promote overall safety of our employees, their families and our community. It also ties back to one of the cooperative principles.
* Educate the community on the risks and potential outcomes of using your phone while driving.
* Make our community safer by reducing the number of people using a phone while driving.
* To do this we have created a pledge that we can all take – it is basically a commitment to safety -- it’s a simple document to sign indicating that you pledge not to use your phone while driving.
* It’s a great way to start a conversation about distracted driving.
* It’s also something that parents and their children can sign together – parents are modeling good behavior and young people are forced to think about their actions; it’s also a way for parents to hold their young drivers accountable if they don’t live up to the pledge.
* It may be corny, but it’s a tangible step that we can all take to make our community safer.

**What Can YOU Do?**

* We can all do something to make our rides safer and those of our loved ones, friends, colleagues and community.
* This is a very simple, but important action.
* Take the pledge – it simply means that you recognize the dangerous risks of talking and texting while driving; that you pledge not to do this; and that you will encourage family members, friends and co-workers to do the same.

* It’s a tangible step that we can all take to make our community safer. It’s modeling a culture of safety.

**Additional Simple Actions You Can Take**

* Take and share the No Text, No Talk Pledge.
* Talk to your family and friends about the dangers of texting and driving.
* Designate a texter or caller next time you drive.
* Put your phone out of sight/reach next time you drive.
* Ask the young people in your car to put their phones away (this will help them create good habits as they become eligible to drive).
* Turn notifications off. The less you hear your phone, the less tempted you'll be to respond while driving.
* Install a driving app like Drive Safe and ZoomSafer to automatically send a message that you’re driving and will respond later.

**What Are the Big Take-Aways?**

* **There is no sugar-coating the facts – texting and/or talking on a device while driving can have devastating, often deadly results.**
* **Texting while driving isn’t multi-tasking, it’s essentially driving blind.**
* Some activities—such as texting—take the driver’s attention away from driving more frequently and for longer periods than other distractions.
* Younger drivers are most at risk. Car crashes are the leading cause of death for American teenagers.
* We are all guilty of this at one time or another.
* When you are doing it, most people think, checking that ONE text, or picking up that ONE urgent call, just for a **brief** time is NOT going to cause harm – but the fact is, you increase the likelihood of an accident every time you use a phone and drive.
* No one plans to be in an accident, and yet they happen every day, in every community.
* Good news is, we can all pledge to improve.
* We all have family and friends who would be heartbroken if you were lost or permanently injured due to an accident involving distracted driving – whether you are at fault or were the victim.
* We all have the power and influence to do something about this danger – and it can start right now.
* Let’s resolve to act on what we have learned and heard today.

**Questions/Discussion Section**

**Notes on Questions/Discussion**

* This is a period when people can ask questions and you can promote discussion. Below are some conversation-starters.
* You can adjust the total time of your talk by limiting or promoting more conversation/questions.
* Make the pledge available to those who want to take one. If you have a pledge poster, invite people to sign it then post it in a high-traffic area – a public area like your library or a break room.
* You can also create and provide stickers to those who sign the pledge.

**Questions/Discussion**

* Show of hands for those that have a driver in their household in their 20s.
* Show of hands for those that have a driver in their household between 15 and 20.
* Show of hands for those that have a teenager or young person that will be getting their license in the near future.
* Those of you who raised your hands – your loved ones have a significantly higher risk of getting in a serious or fatal car crash.
* What kinds of discussions have you had with your young drivers?
* What messages, tactics have worked, what hasn’t worked?
* What have you heard that your friends or other family members are doing to help their young drivers be safe?
* Show of hands for those who know someone who was involved in a “near miss” or an accident because of using a phone while driving?
* Are there any other ideas for not using a phone while driving?
* What are some of your takeaways from the information you heard today?
* As we talk to young people, particularly those who will be driving soon, or who have just started driving, what are the main messages you think we should convey that will resonate with this group? With other audiences?

